

## **II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS**

### **Statewide Information System**

Substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System is determined by whether the State is operating a Statewide information system that can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for children in foster care (item 24).

Missouri achieved substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System. The CFSR determined that the State's information system can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for children in foster care

### **Case Review System**

Five indicators are used to assess the State's performance with regard to the systemic factor of Case Review System. The indicators examine the development of case plans and parent involvement in that process (item 25), the consistency of 6-month case reviews (item 26) and 12-month permanency hearings (item 27), the implementation of procedures to seek termination of parental rights (TPR) in accordance with the timeframes established in the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (item 28), and the notification and inclusion of foster and pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers in case reviews and hearings (item 29).

Missouri is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. This determination is based on the following CFSR findings:

- Case plans are not developed jointly with the child's parent on a consistent basis.
- The 6-month case reviews are conducted through Family Support Team meetings, but these are not always held in a timely manner and often do not meet the Federal requirement that a person who is not involved in the case must be a participant in the review (i.e., a third-party participant).
- The State has not established a process that ensures that each child in foster care has a permanency hearing no later than 12 months from the date a child enters foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter and that ensures that 12-month hearings involve full hearings and not just paper reviews.
- This item is rated as an Area Needing Improvement because CFSR findings indicate that the State does not comply with TPR proceedings in accordance with the provisions of ASFA.
- The State does not have a statewide process to ensure that caregivers are notified regarding hearings and reviews on a consistent basis and that they are routinely given the opportunity to be heard in court hearings. Although there is a State

statute requiring notification, the statute does not specify who (i.e., child welfare agency or court) has the responsibility for notification.

### **Quality Assurance System**

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System is based on whether the State has developed standards to ensure the safety and health of children in foster care (item 30), and whether the State is operating a statewide quality assurance system that evaluates the quality and effectiveness of services and measures program strengths and areas needing improvement (item 31).

Missouri is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. The CFSR determined that the State has standards to protect the safety and health of children and that the State has a statewide quality assurance system that focuses on outcomes and uses data and case reviews to improve performance with regard to achieving safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children.

### **Training**

The systemic factor of Training incorporates an assessment of the State's new caseworker training program (item 32), ongoing training for child welfare agency staff (item 33), and training for foster and adoptive parents (item 34).

Missouri achieved substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Training. The CFSR determined that children's service workers receive initial training that supports the goals and objectives of the agency and usually they are required to complete the training before being assigned cases. The CFSR also found that the State provides both pre-placement and ongoing training to foster and adoptive parents that is available statewide. However, CFSR findings indicate that although ongoing training opportunities are made available to staff, ongoing training is not mandated. Consequently, many children's service workers and supervisors do not participate in ongoing training. In addition, training for new supervisors is no longer provided due to budget cuts.

### **Service Array**

The assessment of the systemic factor of Service Array addresses three questions: (1) Does the State have in place an array of services to meet the needs of children and families served by the child welfare agency (item 35)? (2) Are these services accessible to families and children throughout the State (item 36)? (3) Can services be individualized to meet the unique needs of the children and family served by the child welfare agency (item 37)?

Missouri did not achieve substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array. The CFSR determined that the State has critical gaps in its service array, particularly in the areas of mental health services and substance abuse treatment. In addition, services are not consistently accessible to children and families on a statewide basis. Families in rural communities, in particular, have difficulty accessing a full array of services, such as crisis intervention and family reunification services. Finally, the CFSR found that services are not consistently individualized to meet the needs of families and children.

### **Agency Responsiveness to the Community**

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community incorporates an assessment of the State's consultation with external stakeholders in developing the Child and Family Services Plan (items 38 and 39), and the extent to which the State coordinates child welfare services with services or benefits of other Federal or federally-assisted programs serving the same population (item 40).

Missouri is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. The CFSR determined that the State engages in ongoing consultation with stakeholders and uses their input in developing the State's 5-year plan and preparing progress reports. CFSR findings also indicate that the CD has implemented or is part of a number of efforts to coordinate and integrate services for the children and families that are served by various agencies.

### **Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention**

The assessment of this systemic factor focuses on the State's standards for foster homes and child care institutions (items 41 and 42), the State's compliance with Federal requirements for criminal background checks for foster and adoptive parents (item 43), the State's efforts to recruit foster and adoptive parents that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of foster children (item 44), and the State's activities with regard to using cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate permanent placements for waiting children.

Missouri is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor pertaining to Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention. The CFSR determined that Missouri has implemented comprehensive standards for licensing foster family homes and child care institutions and that these standards are consistently applied to all foster homes and child care institutions receiving title IV-E and IV-B funds. In addition, criminal background checks are consistently completed for prospective foster and adoptive parents and the State has a process in place that promotes use of cross-jurisdictional resources for placing children with foster and adoptive parents. However, the CFSR also determined that the State's recruitment and retention efforts are not meeting the need for an adequate pool of foster and adoptive homes.

**Table 1. Missouri CFSR Ratings for Safety and Permanency Outcomes and Items**

Outcomes and Indicators	Outcome Ratings			Item Ratings		
	<i>In Substantial Conformity?</i>	<i>Percent Substantially Achieved*</i>	<i>Met National Standards?</i>	<i>Rating**</i>	<i>Percent Strength</i>	<i>Met National Standards</i>
Safety Outcome 1-Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	No	78.7	No			
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations				ANI	67	
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment				ANI	83	No
Safety Outcome 2 - Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	No	70.0				
Item 3: Services to prevent removal				ANI	76	
Item 4: Risk of harm				ANI	72	
Permanency Outcome 1- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	No	34.6	Met 1, did not meet 3			
Item 5: Foster care re-entry				Strength	100	Yes
Item 6: Stability of foster care placements				ANI	77	No
Item 7: Permanency goal for child				ANI	75	
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship and placement with relatives				ANI	50	No
Item 9: Adoption				ANI	12.5	No
Item 10: Other planned living arrangement				ANI	33	
Permanency Outcome 2 - The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved	No	61.5				
Item 11: Proximity of placement				Strength	95	
Item 12: Placement with siblings				ANI	79	
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care				ANI	70	
Item 14: Preserving connections				ANI	81	
Item 15: Relative placement				ANI	81	
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents				ANI	68	

\*90 percent of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the State to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

\*\*Items may be rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement (ANI).

**Table 2. Missouri CFSR Ratings for Child and Family Well Being Outcomes and Items**

<b>Outcomes and Indicators</b>	<b>Outcome Ratings</b>		<b>Item Ratings</b>			
	<i><b>In Substantial Conformity?</b></i>	<i><b>Percent Substantially Achieved*</b></i>	<i><b>Met National Standards</b></i>	<i><b>Rating**</b></i>	<i><b>Percent Strength</b></i>	<i><b>Met National Standards</b></i>
Well Being Outcome 1 - Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs	No	42.0				
Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents				ANI	54	
Item 18: Child/family involvement in case planning				ANI	56	
Item 19: Worker visits with child				ANI	62	
Item 20: Worker visits with parents				ANI	57	
Well Being Outcome 2 - Children receive services to meet their educational needs	No	80.0				
Item 21: Educational needs of child				ANI	80	
Well Being Outcome 3 - Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs are met	No	71.4				
Item 22: Physical health of child				ANI	82	
Item 23: Mental health of child				ANI	77.5	

\*90 percent of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the State to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

\*\*Items may be rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement (ANI).

**Table 3: Missouri Performance on the Six Outcome Measures for Which National Standards have been Established**

<b>Outcome Measure</b>	<b>National Standard</b>	<b>Missouri Data FY 2002</b>
Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report in the first 6 months of CY 2001, what percent were victims of another substantiated or indicated report within a 6-month period?	6.1% or less	7.3%
Of all children who were in foster care in the first 9 months of CY 2001, what percent experienced maltreatment from foster parents or facility staff members?	0.57% or less	0.62%
Of all children who entered foster care in FY 2001, what percent were re-entering care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode?	8.6% or less	8.5%
Of all children reunified from foster care in FY 2001, what percent were reunified within 12 months of entry into foster care?	76.2% or more	65.9%
Of all children who were adopted from foster care in FY 2001, what percent were adopted within 24 months of their entry into foster care?	32.0% or more	30.3%
Of all children in foster care during FY 2001 for less than 12 months, what percent experienced no more than 2 placement settings?	86.7% or more	78.7%

**Table 4: Missouri CFSR Ratings for the Seven Systemic Factors**

<b>Systemic Factors</b>	<b>In Substantial Conformity?*</b>	<b>Rating**</b>
<b>IV. Statewide Information System</b>	Yes (3)	
Item 24: System can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals of children in foster care		Strength
<b>V. Case Review System</b>	No (1)	
Item 25: Process for developing a case plan and for joint case planning with parents		ANI
Item 26: Process for 6-month case reviews		ANI
Item 27: Process for 12-month permanency hearings		ANI
Item 28: Process for seeking TPR in accordance with ASFA		ANI
Item 29: Process for notifying caregivers of reviews and hearings and for opportunity for them to be heard		ANI
<b>VI. Quality Assurance System</b>	Yes (4)	
Item 30: Standards to ensure quality services and ensure children's safety and health		Strength
Item 31: Identifiable QA system that evaluates the quality of services and improvements		Strength
<b>VII. Training</b>	Yes (3)	
Item 32: Provision of initial staff training		Strength
Item 33: Provision of ongoing staff training that addresses the necessary skills and knowledge.		ANI
Item 34: Provision of training for caregivers and adoptive parents that addresses the necessary skills and knowledge		Strength
<b>VIII. Service Array</b>	No (1)	
Item 35: Availability of array of critical services		ANI
Item 36: Accessibility of services across all jurisdictions		ANI
Item 37: Ability to individualize services to meet unique needs		ANI
<b>IX. Agency Responsiveness to the Community</b>	Yes (4)	
Item 38: Engages in ongoing consultation with critical stakeholders in developing the CFSP		Strength
Item 39: Develops annual progress reports in consultation with stakeholders		Strength
Item 40: Coordinates services with other Federal programs		Strength
<b>X. Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention</b>	Yes (3)	
Item 41: Standards for foster family and child care institutions		Strength
Item 42: Standards are applied equally to all foster family and child care institutions		Strength
Item 43: Conducts necessary criminal background checks		Strength
Item 44: Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families that reflect children's racial and ethnic diversity		ANI
Item 45: Uses cross-jurisdictional resources to find placements		Strength

\*Systemic factors are rated on a scale from 1 to 4. A rating of 1 or 2 indicates "Not in Substantial Conformity." A rating of 3 or 4 indicates Substantial Conformity

\*\*Items may be rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement (ANI).